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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Recommendations to Prospective Employers of Agency Personnel

1. This memorandum is for your information.
2. Inquiries from prospective employers of present or former Agency employees are usually addressed to the Office of Personnel, although some go directly to supervisory officials. Our replies are usually fairly brief, going to verification of employment data: salary level, dates of employment with the Agency--not under cover status, and general evaluations, e.g., "reasonably satisfactory," "entirely satisfactory," "cooperative," "reliable," etc. When requested, we provide a general job title such as Administrative Assistant, File Clerk, Communications Technician, Economics Researcher, etc. Normally we add a statement that our files contain no derogatory information on the subject. These procedures are often handled by phone calls, especially when the prospective employer has a local establishment.
3. Upon request, we provide a fairly complete analysis of work experience, with the assistance of the individual's former supervisors. Every effort is made, within current security restrictions and advice, to answer such inquiries so that the job prospects of a former employee are advanced and are not damaged by our replies. When our replies are addressed to other security and defense organizations of the Federal government they generally include more detailed information with respect to job experience, length of service with the Agency and performance evaluation.
4. Any information imparted is taken from the official personnel records, which contain cover-security restrictions developed by the Central Cover Branch or Office of Security. For example, while an individual is in cover status, or when he resigns, the Central Cover Branch furnishes the Office of Personnel with the proper cover information for periods of employment since the person first entered on duty with the Agency. Similarly, questionnaires requiring more extensive information on work experience are completed with the assistance of, or by, the component to which the employee was formerly assigned. These replies are double-checked by a senior Office of Personnel staff member so that sensitive information is not revealed. When a file indicates that a former employee was separated because of security considerations, the Office of Security is consulted before the reply is prepared.
5. For security reasons, we have considered it inadvisable to provide separating employees with general recommendation letters. However, unsolicited recommendations are occasionally furnished to outstanding employees. Any

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period of employment abroad, under either official or non-official cover, is an important consideration in preparing such letters since we must avoid recognizing such service as CIA unless the letter can be classified. Samples of such letters are attached.

6. We believe there are disadvantages to a general practice of issuing recommendations to employees leaving the Agency, including the following:

- a. Not all employers are willing to use such statements. Many prefer to receive an evaluation directly from the former employer.
- b. This system is not very flexible for the agency which does not always intend to treat inquiries from all prospective employers exactly the same. For example, we tend to be a little more precise with, and reveal more information to, other Federal agencies engaged in the security and defense functions.
- c. It would probably become apparent to some employers that if a former member of the Agency does not have such a letter some derogatory information on him led to his removal or resignation.

However, we believe our present procedures might be improved by providing summary reference information as a standard item on all reports of separation. Such statements would be prepared with the assistance of the appropriate supervisor.



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Deputy Director  
(Support)

Attachments

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